INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY

LIST OF FAMOUS PSYCHOLOGISTS AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION IN THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY

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This e-content has been designed for the B.A. Part-I Psychology Students. This e-content must be read in continuation to the previously drafted content on Introduction to Psychology for better understanding.

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The breadth and diversity of psychology can be seen by looking at some of its best-known thinkers. While each theorist may have been part of an overriding school of thought, each brought a unique perspective to the field of psychology. The list below provides a snapshot of the careers of leading psychologists and their most important contributions to the field. Developed using the rigorously generated study of "The 100 Most Eminent Psychologists of the 20th Century" as a guide, this list is by no means exhaustive. Instead, the purpose of this list is to offer a glimpse into some of the major theoretical outlooks that have influenced not only psychology but also the larger culture.

B. F. Skinner

B.F. Skinner's staunch behaviorism made him a dominating force in psychology and therapy techniques based on his theories are still used extensively today, including behavior modification and token economies. Skinner is remembered for his concepts of operant conditioning and schedules of reinforcement.

Jean Piaget

Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development had a profound influence on psychology, especially the understanding of children's intellectual growth. His research contributed to the growth of developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, genetic epistemology, and education reform. Albert Einstein once described Piaget's observations on children's intellectual growth and thought processes as a discovery "so simple only a genius could have thought of it."

Sigmund Freud

When people think of psychology, many tend to think of Sigmund Freud. His work supported the belief that not all mental illnesses have physiological causes. He also offered evidence that cultural differences have an impact on psychology and behavior. His work contributed to our understanding of human development, personality, clinical psychology, and abnormal psychology.

Albert Bandura

Albert Bandura's work is considered part of the cognitive revolution in psychology that began in the late 1960s. Bandura's social learning theory stresses the importance of observational learning, imitation, and modeling. "Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if

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people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do," Bandura explained in his 1977 book "Social Learning Theory."

Leon Festinger

Leon Festinger developed the theories of cognitive dissonance and social comparison to explain the ways in which social conditions influence human behavior. Cognitive dissonance is the state of discomfort you feel when you hold two conflicting beliefs. You may smoke even though you know it is bad for your health. His social comparison theory says that you evaluate your ideas by comparing them with what other people believe. You are also more likely to seek out other people who share your beliefs and values.

William James

Psychologist and philosopher William James is often referred to as the father of American psychology. His teachings and writings helped establish psychology as a science. Among his many accomplishments was the publication of the 1,200-page text, "The Principles of Psychology," which quickly became a classic in the field. In addition, James contributed to functionalism, pragmatism, and influenced many students of psychology during his 35-year teaching career.

Ivan Pavlov

Ivan Pavlov was a Russian physiologist whose research on conditioned reflexes and classical conditioning influenced the rise of behaviorism in psychology. Pavlov's experimental methods helped move psychology away from introspection and subjective assessments to the objective measurement of behavior.

Carl Rogers

Carl Rogers placed emphasis on human potential, which had an enormous influence on both psychology and education. He became one of the major humanist thinkers and an eponymous influence in therapy with his client-centered therapy. His daughter, Natalie Rogers, described him as "a model for compassion and democratic ideals in his own life, and in his work as an educator, writer, and therapist."

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Erik Erikson

Erik Erikson's stage theory of psychosocial development helped create interest and research on human development through the lifespan. An ego psychologist who studied with Anna Freud, Erikson expanded psychoanalytic theory by exploring development throughout life, including events of childhood, adulthood, and old age.

Lev Vygotsky

Lev Vygotsky was a contemporary of some better-known psychologists including Piaget, Freud, Skinner, and Pavlov, yet his work never achieved the same eminence during his lifetime. This is largely because many of his writing remained inaccessible to the Western world until quite recently. Starting in the 1960s and through the 1990s that many of his writings were translated from Russian, but his work has become enormously influential in recent decades, particularly in the fields of educational psychology and child development. While his premature death at age 38 put a halt to his work, he went on to become one of the most frequently cited psychologists of the 20th-century.

Wilhelm Wundt

Wilhelm Wundt is best-known for establishing the very first psychology lab in Leipzig, Germany. He is often credited with founding the structuralist school of thought, although it was actually his student Edward Titchener who did so.

Hugo Munsterberg

Hugo Munsterberg was a pioneer in the field of applied psychology, particularly in the areas of industrial-organizational and forensic psychology.

Abraham Maslow

Abraham Maslow was an American psychologist who is frequently referred to as the founder of humanistic psychology. He is perhaps best known for his famous hierarchy of needs and his emphasis on the concept of self-actualization.

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Carl Jung

Carl Jung was a Swiss psychiatrist remembered for his concept of the collective unconscious and four major archetypes. While he was originally a protégé of Freud's, he eventually split from his mentor to pursue his own theories, which he referred to as Analytical psychology.

Alfred Adler

Alfred Adler was an Austrian doctor and originally a colleague of the famous Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud. Adler was eventually booted out of Freud's inner circle, but he went on to found his own set of theories known as Individual Psychology. He is perhaps best known for his concept of the inferiority complex.

Alfred Binet

Alfred Binet was a French psychologist who was commissioned by the French government to create an assessment tool to identify children who needed specialized assistance at school. Binet's work led to the creation of the Binet-Simon Intelligence test. This test remains the basis for many modern tests of intelligence.

G. Stanley Hall

G. Stanley Hall founded the first American psychology lab at John Hopkins University and also became the first president of the American Psychological Association (APA) in 1892.

The Women Who Changed Psychology

Psychology has long placed an emphasis on the contributions of male psychologists such as Sigmund Freud, B.F. Skinner, John B. Watson, and other thinkers. Unfortunately, the important contributions of female psychologists are often overlooked in psychology textbooks. There were many women in psychology, however, who made critical contributions and helped shape the development of the field of psychology.

Where are all the Women in Psychology History?

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While studying the early history of psychology, you might find yourself wondering if all the early psychologists were men. The dominance of male thinkers on lists of important pioneers in early psychology certainly makes it seem that way, but the reality is that women have been contributing to psychology since its earliest days. Estimates suggest that in the early 1900s, roughly 12% of psychologists in the United States were women.

However, many of these pioneering women in psychology faced considerable discrimination, obstacles, and difficulties. Many were not allowed to study with men, were denied degrees they had rightfully earned, or found it difficult to secure academic positions that would allow them to research and publish. Women have made many important and groundbreaking contributions to the field of psychology, often despite facing considerable discrimination due to their sex. These women deserve to be recognized for their pioneering work. The following are just a few of the women who helped shape psychology.

Anna Freud

When most people hear the name Freud, Sigmund is probably the first name that comes to mind. However, the famous psychoanalyst's daughter Anna was a well-known and influential psychologist in her own right. Anna Freud not only expanded upon her father's ideas, but she also helped develop the field of child psychotherapy and influenced other thinkers such as Erik Erikson. Among her many accomplishments are introducing the ***concept of defense mechanisms*** and expanding interest in the field of child psychology.

Mary Whiton Calkins

Mary Whiton Calkins studied at Harvard, although she was never given approval for formal admission. She studied with some of the most eminent thinkers of the time, including William James and Hugo Munsterberg, and completed all of the requirements for a doctorate. Despite this, Harvard refused to grant her a degree on the grounds that she was a woman. Regardless, Calkins went on to become the *first female president of the American Psychological Association*. During her career, she wrote over a hundred professional papers on psychology topics, developed the paired-association technique, and became known for her work in the area of self-psychology. While Harvard may have refused to grant her the degree she rightfully earned, that didn't stop Calkins from becoming an influential psychologist.

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Mary Ainsworth

Mary Ainsworth was an important developmental psychologist. Her work demonstrated the importance of healthy childhood attachments, and she pioneered the use of a technique known as the ***"Strange Situation" assessment***. In her research on mother-child attachments and interactions, Ainsworth would have a mother and a child sit in an unfamiliar room. Researchers would then observe the child's reactions to various situations including a stranger entering the room, being left alone with the stranger, and the mother's return to the room. Ainsworth's groundbreaking work had a major influence on our ***understanding of attachment styles and how these styles contribute to behavior later in life.***

Leta Stetter Hollingworth

Leta Stetter Hollingworth was an early pioneer of psychology in the United States. She studied with Edward Thorndike and made a name for herself for her ***research on intelligence and gifted children.*** Another of her important contributions was her research on the ***psychology of women***. The prevailing opinion at the time was that women were both intellectually inferior to men and essentially semi-invalid when they were menstruating. Hollingworth challenged these assumptions, and her research demonstrated that women were as intelligent and capable as men were, no matter what time of the month it was. Her many accomplishments are perhaps even more remarkable considering the fact that she not only faced considerable obstacles due to gender discrimination, but she also died at the age of 53. Despite a life cut short, her influence and contributions to the field of psychology were impressive.

Karen Horney

Karen Horney was an influential neo-Freudian psychologist known for her take on feminine psychology. When Sigmund Freud famously proposed that women experience ***"penis envy,"*** Horney countered that men suffer from ***"womb envy"*** and that all of their actions are driven by a need to overcompensate for the fact that they cannot bear children. Her outspoken refutation of Freud's ideas helped draw greater attention to the psychology of women. Her theory of neurotic needs and her belief that people were capable of taking a personal role in their own mental health were among her many contributions to the field of psychology.

Melanie Klein

Play therapy is a commonly used technique to help children express their feelings and experiences in a natural and helpful way. Widely used today, a psychoanalyst named Melanie

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Klein played a pivotal role in developing this technique. Through her work with children, she observed that children often utilize play as one of their primary means of communication. Since young children are not capable of some of the more commonly used Freudian techniques such as free association, Klein began to utilize play therapy as a way to investigate children's unconscious feelings, anxieties, and experiences. Klein's work led to a major disagreement with Anna Freud, who believed that younger children could not be psychoanalyzed. Klein suggested that analyzing a child's actions during play allowed the therapist to explore how various anxieties impact the development of the ego and the superego. Today, Kleinian psychoanalysis is considered to be one of the major schools of thought within the field of psychoanalysis.

Mamie Phipps Clark

If you'll read about Mamie Phipps Clark in your textbooks, her name is most likely mentioned only in passing. This is unfortunate because Clark made many important contributions to psychology, including the development of the ***Clark Doll Test, her research on race, and her role in the famous 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education case***. Clark became the first black woman to earn a degree from Columbia University. Despite considerable prejudice based on both her race and her sex, Clark went on to become an influential psychologist. Her research on racial identity and self-esteem help pave the way for future research on self-concept among minorities.

Christine Ladd-Franklin

Christine Ladd-Franklin's role as a female leader in psychology began early in life, as both her mother and aunt were staunch supporters of women's rights. This early influence not only helped her succeed in her field despite considerable opposition, it also inspired her later work advocating for women's rights in academia. Ladd-Franklin had various interests including psychology, logic, mathematics, physics, and astronomy. She challenged one of the leading male psychologists of the day, Edward Titchener, for not allowing women into his group for experimentalists, and ***she developed an influential theory of color vision***. She studied at John Hopkins and completed a dissertation titled "The Algebra of Logic". However, the school did not permit women to receive a Ph.D. at that time. She went on to spend time in Germany studying color vision with Hermann von Helmholtz and Arthur Konig. ***She eventually rejected Helmholtz's theory of color vision to develop her own.*** Finally, in 1926, nearly 44 years after completing her dissertation, John Hopkins awarded her the doctorate degree she had rightfully earned. Today, she is remembered for both her work in psychology and her influence as a pioneering woman in a field once dominated by men.

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Margaret Floy Washburn

Margaret Floy Washburn was the ***first woman to be awarded a Ph.D. in psychology***. She conducted her graduate studies with Edward B. Titchener and was his first graduate student. Like many women on this list, her work in psychology took place in a time when women were often denied positions in academia based on their gender. Despite this, she became a well-respected researcher, writer, and lecturer. Her primary research interests were in the areas of animal cognition and basic physiological processes. She strongly influenced comparative psychology and developed a motor theory of cognition suggesting that the body's movements had an influence on thought.

Eleanor Maccoby

Eleanor Maccoby's name is likely familiar to anyone who has ever studied developmental psychology. Her pioneering work in ***the psychology of sex differences*** played a major role in our current understanding of things such as socialization, biological influences on sex differences, and gender roles. She was the first woman to chair the psychology department at Stanford University and, by her own description, the first woman to ever deliver a lecture at Stanford wearing a pantsuit. She held a position as professor emeritus at Stanford and received numerous awards for her groundbreaking work. The Maccoby Book Award is named in her honor.

As you can see, many women made important contributions to the early development of psychology as a science. While women once made up a minority in psychology, the tides have turned dramatically. According to a 2017 report, women make up more than half the members of the American Psychological Association, and 75% of psychology graduate students are women.

In the next lecture we will be talking about the scope/fields of Psychology and their application in the real world.

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